

Message Text

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46

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARAE-00 SCCT-01 SY-05 AID-05 DHA-02

SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03

H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USSS-00 CU-02 EB-07 COME-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01

EUR-12 /085 W

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O R 091259Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8540

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN SALVADOR 2717

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, ES, ASEC

SUBJECT: RELEASE OF KIDNAP VICTIM

REF: (A) SAN SALVADOR 2657 (B) SAN SALVADOR 2591

USCINCSO FOR POLAD

1. FRANCISCO "CHICO" DE SOLA, KIDNAPPED ON JUNE 30, WAS RELEASED UNHARMED DURING THE EARLY MORNING HOURS OF JULY 7. DE SOLA MADE HIS WAY TO HIS FAMILY HOME AND IS NOT KNOWN TO HAVE EMERGED SINCE.

THE GOES HAS NOT ISSUED ANY PUBLIC STATEMENT ON THE RELEASE OR THE EVENTS THAT LED TO IT. NEITHER HAS DE SOLA OR HIS FAMILY.

ALTHOUGH NOT CERTAIN, IT APPEARS THAT THE FAMILY ALONE CONDUCTED WHATEVER NEGOTIATIONS TOOK PLACE WITH THE KIDNAPPERS AND PAID AN AS YET UNSPECIFIED AMOUNT OF MONEY (PRESS CONJECTURES RUN FROM 2 MILLION COLONES TO 3 MILLION DOLLARS) TO EFFECT THE RELEASE.

THE FAMILY APPEARS TO HAVE ATTEMPTED TO KEEP THE GOVERNMENT OUT
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OF THE MATTER, AT LEASE UNTIL DE SOLA WAS RETURNED.

2. SHORTLY AFTER DE SOLA'S RELEASE, LOCAL NEWSPAPERS RECEIVED A COMMUNIQUE FROM THE PREOPLE'S REVOLUTIONARY ARMY (EJERCITO REVOLUCIONARIO DEL PUEBLO - ERP) WHICH CLAIMED CREDIT FOR THE OPERATION. FYI THE ERP IS, TO THE BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE, A SAMLL POSSIBLY 20-30 ACTIVIST MEMBERS, AND ILL-DEFINED ORGANIZATION WITH A KNOWN HISTORY GOING BACK TO A NOV. 1973 ROBBERY OF ARMS FROM A SAN SALVADOR STORE. ITS MEMBERSHIP UNKNOWN BUT IS THOUGHT TO OVERLAP WITH OTHER REVOLUTIONARY GROUPS, AND MIGHT BE IDENTICAL WITH THE FPL). A PICTURE ACCCOMPANIED THE NOTE SHOWING DE SOLA UNDER AN ERP BANNER OF ITS INITIALS AND STAR. THE COMMUNIZUE SAID DE SOLA WAS HELD IN A "PEOPLE'S JAIL" AND RELEASED AFTER HIS FAMILY PAID A "SUBSTANTIAL SUM OF MONEY" AS A "WAR TAX" TO HELP FINANCE THE REVOLUTION. DE SOLA WAS CHARACTERIED AS THE "KING OF THE SALVADORAN OLIGARCHY".

3. COMMENT - IF IT IS A POLITICALLY MOTIVATED KIDNAPPING, THE DE SOLA CASE HAS A NUMBER OF UNUSUAL FEATURES. FIRST, AS FAR AS WE KNOW, THERE WERE NO POLITICAL CONDITIONS TO THE RELEASE, NO EFFORT TO EMBARRASS THE GOVERNMENT OR FORCE IT TO BOW TO UNPLEASANT DEMANDS. SIMILARLY, THE KIDNAP GROUP APPARENTLY DID NOT INSIST ON ACCESS TO THE MEDIA TO PROCLAIM ITS POLITICAL PLATFORM OR OTHERWISE CHAMPION ITS CAUSE. FROM WHAT IS KNOWN AT THIS TIME, THOSE WHO CARRIED OUT THE KIDNAPPING WERE WILLING TO DEAL EXCLUSIVELY WITH THE FAMILY, AND ACCEPT MONEY, ALBEIT A LARGE AMOUNT, IN EXCHNAGE FOR DE SOLA.

4. IN THE ATMOSPHERE GENVERATED BY THIS EVENT, AND APPREHENSION THAT DISRUPTION OF THE MISS UNIVERSE PAGEANT MIGHT BE USED BY ENEMIES OF THE REGIME TO DISCREDIT IT, OTHER EVENTS ARE BEING LINKED WITH THE DE SOLA CASE TO PROVE A "TERRORIST THREAT". LAST FRIDAY ANOTHER LEADING BUSINESSMAN, OSCAR SACA, WAS WOUNDED DURING AN APPARENT ATTEMPT TO KIDNAP HIM BY 4-6 MACHINE-GUN CARRYING ASSAILANTS. THAT SAME DAY, SEVERAL ASSAULTS ON BUSINESSES AND FACTORIES WERE REPORTED. THE GOES IS THOUGHT TO HAVE PICKED UP SOME PERSONS IT SUSPECTS HAVE KNOWLEDGE OF THESE CRIMES. ON WHAT BASIS WE DO NOT KNOW. IT IS HANDLING THESE ARRESTS QUIETLY, APPARENTLY NOT WANTING TO DISRUPT THE MISS UNIVERSE CONTEST. SECURITY MEASURES AT THE PAGEANT ITSELF ARE HEAVY.

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